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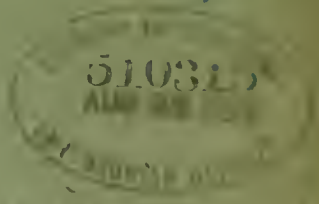
The Manor of Philipsburgh

By Hon. T. Astley Atkins.

June 5th, 1894.



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The Manor of Philipsburgh.

A PAPER READ BEFORE THE

NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

BY

T. ASTLEY ATKINS,

Vice-President of the Yonkers Historical and Library Association.

JUNE 5th, 1894.

PUBLISHED BY
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1894.

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NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

170 Second Avenue.

New York, April 19th, 1894.

Hon. T Astley Atkins

Dear Sir,

The Committee on Papers of our Society have learned with great pleasure that you have in course of preparation a paper on the "Manor of Philipsburgh," and having expressed a willingness to favor the Society at its regular meeting on Tuesday Evening, June 5th, next, with results of your researches, and in accordance with their instructions I beg to convey to you their cordial invitation to that effect. I remain, Dear Sir,

Very truly yours,

J W C. LEVERIDGE,
Chairman.

MANOR OF PHILIPSBURGH.

PART I.

CREATION OF THE MANOR.

To MANY men there is in the unknown an inexplicable fascination. This fascination has at all times impelled the more venturesome to action, to investigation and to conquest. History is crowded with examples of the truth of this saying. The history of our country furnishes numberless cases of the seeking after prosperity or glory in the favoring continent upon which we live. For several generations the mystery of the Atlantic Coast was sought to be solved by Dutchman, Englishman, Spaniard and Frenchman, not to speak lightly of the efforts of the valorous Swede in the same direction. Could gold be found? Could religion be furthered? Could honor be secured in this mysterious region? Such were the questions asked.

Across the turbulent Atlantic—so our Dutch ancestors learned from report, from travelers and from written scources of information—there was country of unlimited possibilities, a country both like and unlike their own beloved Netherland. Their interest was aroused, when, from various sources, they heard of 'great rivers land-locked harbors, marsh and meadow land, and tree-clad hills, with open valleys, growing familiar products, and all near the ocean and easily reached, once the great sea was safely passed.

While the Dutchman was piously inclined, he made no claim of salvation of souls to justify his seizure of aboriginal land, and while he would not fail to secure the

golden nugget by fair means, he scorned its acquisition by foul. Your true Dutchman prefers, and always did prefer, something like himself, that is, something that was solid and when once acquired, would not take wings to itself. While the lighter spirited Spaniard digged and murdered for gold, the Dutchman delved and sought for land. And so with the lust of land in his mind, and with an eye to the possession of dryer and broader acres than the fatherland offered to its crowded children, the denizen of the low country made his quiet and almost unannounced settlement in the new world, the land of promise.

The Dutchman has and always will have a stolid, persuasive method of pushing his way to the front. Seldom discouraged by adverse circumstances, always possessed of an indomitable spirit of perseverance, hard to convince that he is beaten, he was just the settler for the country he coveted and possessed.

The reality never seemed to disappoint him as it did his English and Spanish co-settler. Probable the glitter did not attract him so much as the reality impressed him. Used to hardship and stern reality at home he had possibly not expected an easier life in the new world. Accustomed to earn his bread in true scriptural manner he had no expectation of finding the meadows and forests golden, otherwise than through the same toil and anxiety which ruled his early home. And so the wily, able-bodied Dutch settler came, and seeing, approved and claimed this little island for his own. He brought not only his unconquerable spirit with him, but also his family and his earthly possessions. He came to stay. So also, alas! did many who had neither family nor possessions to bring with them.

Soon even this island of the *Manhates* was not capacious enough to suit the now thoroughly aroused Dutch settler, and he looked longingly over towards the larger islands, and peered audaciously northward up the river of Hendrick Hudson.

To the Northward, but a little way up the river, and over on the Main, there seemed a goodly land. The lower portion was wonderfully like the home country he had so

lately left. There were swift flowing tidal streams, and thousands of acres of salt marsh and meadow land, low lying along the stream and a little above the marsh. Possibly if it had been a little higher above the water we might have been treating of an English Manor instead of a Dutch one. Who knows? Less than this has turned the tide of conquest and settlement.

The settlement of Manhattan Island is over familiar to all, and we need not delay even a moment to consider it. The settlement of the Manor land adjacent to this island is not so well known, and deserves more consideration than has been accorded it by local historians.

When the dweller in New Amsterdam in very early days started northward, he seldom reached the tidal river known as the Harlem and Spuyten Duyvil Creek. Over that river still dwelt Indians, and the country was virtually unknown. It was easier to sail up the Hudson, or along the Sound, and immeasurably safer, than it was to investigate the qualities of meadow and forest to the north of the little stream, which separated the Main from the Island. Again it was the mysterious land. But long years after the Dutchman had settled this Island, the Main land was unsettled and practically unknown.

No doubt longing eyes had been cast that way, but it was too far away from the town to attempt settlement in earlier days. It was unsafe to do so.

As one passed up or down the noble river to the new settlements at the North, the future Manor of Phillipsburgh looked pleasing, though hardly accessible. One proud spirited Dutchman saw it, coveted it, and later won it, Adriaen van der Donck by name.

Before further mention of this celebrated character, let us for a moment dwell upon the scene of the future Manor, as it appeared at the time of Hendrick Hudson's sail along its West line on his trips North and South.

Across from the island of the *Manhates*, over the Kill now known as Spuyten Duyvil Creek, the Manor land commenced on the river side with the majestic bluff known to the Indian as *Sho-rack-ap-pock*, and later to the Dutch as the *Spuyt-den-duyvil*, or the point of the

"devils." You will note that tradition gives this section of the Manor the credit of the first unpleasant contact of the hardy Dutchmen, or Englishmen as you will, with the black "devils" of the Main. We often find the Indians mentioned as devils in the early New York and Jersey records.

To the east of *Sho-rack-ap-pock* the land under the bluff was salt meadow and sloping hill-side until a point on the Harlem was reached, where Fordham lies. The bluff reached along the Hudson nearly four miles, an unbroken forest; the meadow land stretched up into the country behind it full as many miles. To the Dutchman this rear country was indeed most charming, most home-like.

Four miles up the river the first break occurs. Happy *Nap-peck-a-mack* here came bubbling and sparkling fresh from the hills of "*Chappequa*," and flowed untainted and pure into the *Ma-hi-can-i-tuck*, "ever flowing waters." In fifty years after settlement by the Dutch we find *Nap-peck-a-mack* corrupted into *Nepperhaem*, and its Indian dwellers into *Mahicanders*, the Mohicans of their English successors.

Following the line of hills on the east bank of the Hudson, the next notable break was at *Wick-quas-keck*, corrupted into *Wicker's Creek*, at Dobb's Ferry.

At Tarrytown, *Alipconck*, the *Po-can ti-co* broke through the forest-clad hill before one came to *Sint Sinck*, and last of all the hill sloped off at the *Kitcha-wanck*, or Croton River. East of this river bluff was a perfect jumble of narrow valleys and steep forest-clad hills, until the line of the *Neperah* (spell it as you will, *Nepera*, *Nepperhan*, *Nipporha*, or *Nappeckamack*) the eastern boundary line for many a mile north of the Bronx, to which the line shifted when the Nepperan struck out for the West. Incidentally you have the boundaries of the Manor.

And who dwelt there in those early days? Ruttenber is my authority for saying that the *Manhates* of the island spread over the lower mainland at and about *Shorackappock*, even so far as *Nappeckamack*, and then the *Wick-*

quaskecks north and east of them; for we hear of *Wick-quaskecks* as far over as Greenwich on the Sound.

Pursuing our journey northward we find the wigwams of the *Sint Sincks*. Numerous small settlements also dotted the interior country. Thus we have discovered and peopled with Indians, that tract of land now known as the south-west corner of old Westchester County, covered at present by the well known settlements of Kings Bridge, Spuyten Duyvil, Riverdale, Yonkers, Hastings, Dobbs' Ferry, Irvington, Tarrytown and Sing Sing.

In the days we write of, however, the Indian settlers had a worse name than have their white successors. A sample opinion may be given: One Wassenaar writes as follows: "On the east side (of the Hudson) on the main land, dwell the Manhattans, a bad race of savages, who have always been very obstinate and unfriendly towards our people." Just why this writer gave the main-land folk such a bad name is puzzling, unless it be that the savage objected to the Dutch trespassing upon his little farm.

Of these North River Indians Adriaen van der Donck wrote as follows: "From sixteen to eighteen families occupied one house." These houses, it would seem, were rudely constructed arbors, rarely exceeding twenty-five feet in length. He continues: "A single fire in the centre served them all, although each family occupied at night its particular division and mats." They suffered, as might well be supposed, in this climate, and in such houses, from rheumatism and toothache, and were prone to apoplexy and gout. For all these ills their chief remedy was the sweating bath. He further says of them: "They are cheerful when they have a sufficiency to support nature." Their food consisted of badgers, dogs, fish, snakes, frogs and such like. They made pap, which they called sapsis, and mixed it with beans. They were not particularly regular about meals, eating when hunger prodded them to it. A right royal feast is said to have been beaver tails, brains of fish and sapsis ornamented with beans. When eating they squatted.

The same writer says that in those days the river was

rich in sturgeon, bass, sheepshead and the like, and he says that in his day, about the middle of the seventeenth century two frisky whales journeyed northward, even so far as Cohoes. Even the staid Dutchman loved to tell a wondrous tale.

It is my purpose to indulge this evening in as few dates and quotations as is possible, but to fix matters more clearly in our minds a date now and then seems absolutely necessary. It was in the year sixteen hundred and thirty-nine, and in the month of August, at Fort Amsterdam, that the first of those piously conceived robberies of the natives took place, and the Dutch West India Company *bought* from *Feckquemeck* and other guileless Indians *Keckeshick*, "which lies over against the flats of the Island of Manhates."

About the year sixteen hundred and forty-six Adriaen van der Donck is reported as the purchaser of these or a portion of these lands, and land to the North, including *Nepperhaem*, from an Indian Chief named *Tackarew*. Titles were shadowy in those days, and boundaries uncertain, but van der Donck was recognized as "Patroon of the Colony of Nepperhaem, called by him Colendonck." The probable boundaries of his estate took in most, if not all, of the old town and present City of Yonkers. It was bounded "on the North by a stream called *Maccakassin*, and ran South to Nepperhaem; thence to *Shorakapkock* Kill and to *Pa-pi-ri-ni-men* Creek, and Eastward to the Bronx." Not quite all yet of the Manor of Phillipsburgh, but a very valuable portion of it, especially the low land.

Having treated the personal history of van der Donck at length in a paper read before the Westchester County Historical Society at their annual meeting at the Court House in White Plains, and having filed a copy of that paper in your library, you will not be asked to consider the first Patroon of Yonkers at any great length now. But a few words concerning this celebrated man, whose birthplace, Breda Holland, I visited a few years ago in search of historical material, may not be amiss.

Young van der Donck was brought up amid the din of war, and the disquiet of a religious struggle, which shook

the little world around him to its very foundations. After pursuing his studies to the extent of the facilities of that day, he enjoyed the privilege of a course of law at the University of Leyden, which institution afterwards conferred on him the degree of Doctor of the Civil and Canon Law.

In the year sixteen hundred and forty-one he was appointed Sheriff of Renssalaerwyck. His stay at the North was not the most cheerful period of his life, for he was engaged in numerous squabbles, and rather wore his welcome out there, and probably was better satisfied with his Patroonship down the river. Certainly he was most of his life at variance with the constituted authorities, whether at Amsterdam, New Amsterdam, or Renssalaerwyck. It is said of these early times that when the Patroons were not busy fighting the natives, they were quarrelling with the home government, and when these pastimes failed, then they managed to embroil themselves with their English neighbors.

After van der Donck came down from Renssalaerwyck the select men of New Amsterdam chose him and two other "persons of honor and of good name and fame," to go home and "represent the poor condition of the country and pray for redress."

Van der Donck was an agitator, a reformer, and always a friend of the people. It reads like our Revolutionary history, that the New Netherlands Dutchman's wrongs arose from, 1st. Unsuitable government; 2d. Scanty privileges; 3d. Onerous imposts and exactions. During his residence as People's Delegate at the Hague, he received many far more incendiary appeals than this simple statement, which he took with him. It is impossible to follow the career of van der Donck in detail; it would fill books to do so.

He returned to this Colony in the year sixteen hundred and fifty-three, but no account of his reception has come into my hands, and his movements from that date until his death are but slightly recorded. From subsequent records, in which the division of his property is mentioned, it is probable that he died within a short time

after his return to his Colony. A few years later we find him spoken of by his ungrateful neighbors as "Old Ver Donck."

Between the time of Adriaen van der Donck and the possession of the first of the Philipses, there was a period of unrest, and re-settlement in and upon the Main land. The Indian rising of Sixteen hundred and fifty-five cleared the land between the Croton and the Harlem and the Hudson and the Bronx rivers of inhabitants. It is supposed, although there is no real authority to back up the supposition, that the Indians swept from the face of the earth not only every vestige of van der Donck's descendants, but all their cattle and farm stock, as well as their houses and barns. But it is fair to presume that some of them, with their moveable property, fled to their relatives on Long Island. For several years, at least after the so-called "rising," the main land adjacent to the Island of the Manhates was not the safest place in the world for a gentleman's country residence. Gradually, however, the towns people recovered from their fright, and we find transfers of parts of the land adjacent to the island, and some considerable settlements on the borders of our tract. But it is generally conceded that the events of Sixteen hundred and fifty-five reduced the south west corner of what is now Westchester County to the almost identical state of aboriginal quiet in which it was found by Adriaen van der Donck, when he took nominal possession, and started out to recruit a colony for it in Holland.

PART II.

THE MANOR OF PHILIPSBURG.

We now come to the Philipse family's possession. Everybody knows, that of all of the Dutch residents of the prosperous city of New Amsterdam, Frederic Vlypse was indeed by far the wealthiest and most important. To doubt it would be heresy. In the year of the Indian rising

just mentioned, did he not patriotically contribute the magnificent sum of twenty guilders towards defraying the expense of constructing the city defences? Somehow or other the Collector got his name on the list as Flipzen, which, probably did not trouble that worthy gentleman much, as he had to put up with more frequent changes of name in the course of transition from ffreric Vlypse, to Frederick Philipse, Esquire, than most of his Dutch fellow citizens.

Nineteen years later this well-to-do merchant, living then on Brouwer's Straat, near the fort, was considered, and rightly so, "the richest man of his time," being credited with worldly possessions to the value of One hundred and fifty thousand dollars, rated then in almost uncountable guilders. He never described himself, as did the church records, as "De Heer Frederick Philipse" to his friends and acquaintances, until the day of his death, he always wrote and called himself Frederick Vlypse.

It mattered little to him who ruled the city, for did not his position as the richest merchant of the time, and the all persuasive power of his guilders, enable him to be in with all parties? When the Dutch held possession of New Amsterdam, he was a Dutchman, when the English, he was an Englishman. The change of fealty rested as easy upon his conscience as the change of name to which he was so frequently subjected.

Like all good Dutchmen, Felypsen, as he was sometimes called in earlier days, loved to increase his stock of guilders, and, for that noble purpose carried on, as far as was possible in those early days, a trade with foreign lands. He lacked, however, one very much coveted privilege, namely, free-trade along the coast of New Netherlands. Once his mind made up, it did not take him long to attain his object. For had not their High Mightinesses in the Charter of Sixteen hundred and twenty-nine granted to Patroons the right of free-trade along the aforesaid coast? What easier way then to obtain this last and most precious franchise than to buy a plantation, and become a Patroon? And, as a Patroon could purchase

and hold full twelve miles of shore line, where could be found a choicer spot than the lands of van der Donck at Yonkers and the meadows and slopes of the Pocantico? The trade of the coast might thus easily be obtained.

And so it happened that the land on the river was bought, and Castle Philipse built on the Pocantico, and the Manor House on the Nepperhan. But do not think that this was done in a trice. On the contrary the Royal Charter, dated the twelfth day of June, Sixteen hundred and ninety-three, shows about the following state of affairs. The Southernmost tract upon the "Main," bounded to the North by a rivulet called by the Indians *Maccackassin*, so running Southward to Nepperhan, from thence to the Kill *Shorackka Pock* and to *Pa-par-rin-no-mo*, which is the most southernmost bounds, then to go across the country, eastward by that which is commonly known by the name of Bronx's river, came to Vlypse by easy stages from various parties. And then there was another plot under the following description, "a certain tract or parcel of land beginning at a creek or river called by the Indians *Pocanteco* or *Wackandeco*, with power thereon to set a mill or mills with a due portion of land on each side, adjoining unto the said river, lying within the bounds of the Indian lands at Wicker's Creek, on the east side of the Hudson river," which parcel, not to trouble you, with the exact words of the technical description, ran up into the country "as far as the creek goeth," except where it approached within four hundred feet of the *Nippiorha*. A glance at the Westchester County Map will show that these two small streams take their rise not far from each other, and for quite a while flow southward at no great distance from one another. The *Po-can-tico* finds the Hudson at Tarrytown, the Nepperhan at Yonkers.

Another parcel was that lying about *Wiq quas-keck* to the North side and tending from the land of the aforesaid Frederick Philipse running along the North river to the north of the small creek called by the Indians *Sepackena* Creek as far as it goeth into the woods, and coming to the end of the aforesaid creek then shall the aforesaid

pieces or parcels of land have their line northeast, &c., &c. Still another began at the South side of a creek called *Bissiglick* and so northerly and then easterly over to the Pocantico; and another parcel southerly from this creek *Bissiglick* and East over to the Nepperhan.

The liberality of these boundaries will be noted at this time when our Westchester neighbors are often in the Courts over an inch or so of encroachment, or the drip of a neighbor's eaves suffices to set a whole street in a turmoil.

If you have followed the intimation of the earlier pages of my paper, you will note that these purchases just spoken of cover about as well as any such generous description can cover, a very large and important tract of country and somewhat more land than van der Donck claimed to hold. The villages of Kings Bridge, Spuyten Duyvil and Riverdale at the south end, and Yonkers City in the Centre, and Tarrytown at the north, all seem to be included in these purchases.

Then is mentioned the most northerly plot, that lying above the Pocantico, the original description of which reads about as follows: "All that tract or portion of land commonly called by the Indians *Sinck Sinck*, and situate, lying and being on the east side of Hudson's river by the northwest part of the land purchased by the said Frederick Phillips, and so running alongst Hudson's river to a certain creek or river called *Kitchawan*, and from thence running alongst said creek two English miles," and then eastward to the *Nippiorha*, and back along Philipse's land to the Hudson river.

By this last description we are brought to the Croton river. Besides this compact tract Mr. Philipse acquired title to land over at Tappan in Rockland County, and in the highlands to the north. Indeed a noble domain.

By the time Philipse had acquired so much land he had also managed to make many enemies, persistent enemies, who were ever on the watch for opportunities to perplex and annoy him. One of these, Earl Bellmont, took the trouble to write to England concerning extravagant land grants. In one letter he says: "Fred. Philips

and his son, and most of those grantees have their land lying on Hudson's river—the river it is that makes the land valuable—and should they have the liberty of choosing, they will take the lands that lye to the river, and that which lies backward from the river will be worth no man's acceptance." Then certain other jealous merchants complained that "particular connivance has been practiced to some few Dutch merchants, viz.: ffrederick Phillips and Stephanus Cortlandt, in regard to trade by those discouragements given indeed to all English." It was gravely charged in a public document of that time, that "the Governor gave instructions to one ffalkins, who is head searcher, not to be too strict what goods came to ffrederick Phillips, but to be very strict in searching what goods came to Penhorn and Robinson."

Governer Andros very promptly replied that "Mr. ffrederick Phillipse and Captain Cortlandt are very eminent men, and were heretofore magistrates of the City, and were since taken into the Council, of which they still are and deserve to be."

Thus far everything which the industrious Vlypse touched seemed to flourish, and his enemies and accusers were constantly defied and vanquished. In one Council after another this "eminent man," as the Governor called him, served his new master, all the while increasing his worldly stores and enlarging both his home and his foreign trade.

At the moment of his greatest prosperity came the one sorrow of his life. The great merchant had, as we have seen, envious rivals in business, who were constantly watching for some weak point in his trade. Some little, or, mayhap, some great fault in his dealings.

Now, it appeared that it had been enacted as one of the laws of the Colony, in "An Act Restraining and Punishing Privateers and Pyrates. That all and every person or persons that shall trade or hold any correspondence with any person that shall be deemed Pyrates, shall be lyable to be prosecuted against as accessories and confederates, and to suffer such Pains and Penalties as in such case by law is provided." And this enactment was neces-

sary, because piracy was rife in those days, and many a merchant, of otherwise good repute, had been suspected of dealing in stolen goods, and of winking at certain very questionable transactions. Soon rumors, started dear knows how, or by whom, began to fly around thick and fast that the Philipses, father and son, were also engaged in the unlawful trade. These rumors then took shape in somewhat definite suggestions, which suggestions in turn grew soon into positive charges. The Board of Trade said, without circumlocution, "We only beg leave to add one thing further, it is an account of a ship or sloop called the Frederick, belonging to Mr. Frederick Phillips, one of His Majesty's Council of New York, which, upon expectation of a vessel there from Madagascar, was sent out by the said Frederick Philips, under the conduct of Adolphus Philips, his son, upon pretence of a voyage to Virginia, but really to cruise at sea in order to meet the said vessel from Madagascar. Upon meeting of that vessel great parcells of East India goods were, by direction of the said Adolphus Philips, taken out of her and put aboard said sloop Frederick, with which by his order she sayled to Delaware Bay, and lay there privately. He, in the meanwhile, returned in the Madagascar ship—having then only negroes slaves on board—to New York, and after some days came again to the Frederick sloop in Delaware Bay. There said sloop delivered some small part of the East India cargo, and from thence, by his direction, sayled with the rest—'north about Scotland—to Hamburgh, where, some seizure having been made by Sir Paul Picaut and the men sent hither, they have, each of them, severally made depositions to that matter." The Captain of the Frederick was one Humphrey Perkings, said to have been one of the crew of the notorious pirate Coates.

Some one about that time wrote that, "it does not look well that Mr. Philipse should imploy a man of such character."

No very satisfactory answer could be made to these very grave and direct charges. It was useless to deny the main facts. The charges were too grave and too well proven to the home government to allow the matter to remain

entirely unnoticed. Cause for action was given by reason of a petition sent from New York praying that "Frederick Philips (whose great concerns in illegal trade are not only the subject of common fame, but are fully and particularly proved by the depositions relating to the Frederick sloop aforementioned) may be removed from his place in Council." The petition was approved, and in Sixteen hundred and ninety-eight Frederick Philips was removed from his position in His Majesty's Council for the Colony of New York.

It will now be necessary to retrace our steps somewhat and note a few of the doings of Vlypse and his noble wife as regards the Manor. Having acquired possession of the land, upon some parts of which there were now settlements, as would appear from the recitations of various records preserved to us, Philipse as we may now call him, proceeded to arrange for a dwelling or dwellings for himself, his family and retainers, at several points within the Manor.

The low lying land upon the Pocantico to the north of the present village of Tarrytown seemed a goodly spot, and here we find him erecting and using what is now known to us as Castle Philipse. Here also he built the renowned Church at Sleepy Hollow, which locality our Irving has made so well known.

Another spot, probably already used for mill purposes by his predecessor, upon which he built at least a portion of the present house, was at *Nap-pack-a-mack*, the "rapid water settlement" of the Indians. Here is now the completed Manor House of the Philpses, revered and cherished by our Yonkers people as a sacred gift entrusted to us for safe and hallowed keeping.

Efforts are now being made by the Historical Society to obtain permanent possession of this, "Manor Hall," as we call it, and to establish therein a historical museum and library. At present it is used as a City Hall, but all things being considered, is well kept and in a good state of preservation. I quote from

"Heroism of women of Westchester County."
Women Exhibit—Worlds' Columbian Exposition.
Julia Fenton Atkins,
Yonkers, N. Y., 1892.

"Among the Dutch dames of Westchester none are "more renowned, none better known than Catharine, "daughter of the Right Honorable Oloff Stevenson Van "Cortlandt, second wife of Vrederyck Vlypsen, Lord of "the Manor of Phillipsburgh.

"Oloff Van Cortlandt was a man of great learning, an "able Councillor and Burgomaster of New Amsterdam, so "that Catharine enjoyed to the greatest possible extent "the benefits which his education and high social position "conferred. Reared in the lap of luxury in the great "town on Manhattan Island, it seems an odd choice which "led her to the solitudes of Westchester County. Were "it not for her intrepid course during the thirty or more "years in which she made the little Castle on the Pocan-"tico her home, our western line of settlements along the "Hudson would not have advanced as rapidly as they "did. Indeed what would Philipse Manor have been "without her genial presence and encouraging work in "the wilderness of which Governor Bellomont spoke so "slightingly about that time, namely, that the greater "part of Westchester County would remain a wilderness "for all time. It was the same Earl who snappishly re-"marked when he came as an English Governor to the "Colony, 'Van Kip, Van Dam and Van Cortlandt; the "names speak Dutch and the men scarce speak English.'

"In the last days of the seventeenth century Philipse "built a dam across the Pocantico, a little above the point "where it sluggishly flowed into and mixed with the waters "of the greater Hudson. Here, too, he built his so-called "Castle Philipse, and here he and his brave wife built the "'Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow.' At this time "access was had to this point chiefly by boat, but tradi-"tion has it that, so interested in her work settling and "evangelizing was she, that she often rode on horseback "through the forest over Indian trails from her city resid "ence to the little Castle on the Pocantico. And this

"when the terrible days of the Massacre were not yet "become historical.

"Not alone was Catharine noted because she braved "the terrors of a new settlement, or because she happened "to be the Lady of the Manor. Being a woman endowed "with great gifts, she imparted those gifts to her people, "and the impress of her character and the evidence of her "charities are felt and seen to-day on and around the "Pocantico, although two hundred years have elapsed "since she endowed the Church and instructed the Dutch "settlers. Upon the Communion service of this Church "is engraved the name of Catharine Van Cortlandt.

"After Frederick Philipse's death in seventeen hun-"dred and two, and until seventeen hundred and thirty, "Catharine Van Cortlandt was the life and light of the "settlement. In the Church records she is tenderly spoken "of as the Right Honorable Godfearing, very wise and "prudent Lady Catharine Philipse. So interested was she "in the Church and its work, that it is said she defrayed "the expenses of bringing the minister when he came from "his home in Hackensack several times a year for about "twenty years."

By the Royal Charter before mentioned Philipse had many and valuable franchises conferred upon him, notably the right to build a bridge and levy toll at the river at Spuyten Duyvil Creek, and it was in the Charter provided that, "the aforesaid bridge be from henceforth called Kingsbridge." That was just two hundred and one years ago, and that bridge bears the same name to this day, as does the settlement which lies adjacent thereto. In those days each foot passenger paid two pence current money, and each man and horse six pence. Cattle, &c., in proportion. And then the Lord of the Manor could hold Court and impose fines and exercise many powers later vested only in the representatives of a free people.

The Charter reserved to the King the magnificent rent of Four Pounds, Twelve Shillings annually, together with the privilege of passing the King's troops, wagons, coaches, &c., over Kingsbridge free of toll.

Before Philipse's death in the early days of the eighteenth century, he had the satisfaction to see very considerable progress in the settlement of his Manor. But as his primary object was not colonization in the purchase, it is not strange that greater progress toward opening up the country was not made. Certain it is, however, that the beginning of the new century found a notable change and many settlers in the Manor.

The period ranging from the death of Frederick Philipse to the attainder of the last Philipse was one of great and interesting growth. Old St. John's Church, near the Yonkers Manor Hall, was built. Several incipient villages sprang up, chiefly upon the sites of the Indian settlements. Roads, such as they were, were cut through the forest, bridges were built across the streams, farms were let to a stalwart and intelligent tenantry, and a good form of local government inaugurated. Great additions were made to the Castle at Tarrytown and to Manor Hall at Yonkers, and the grounds around them were beautified in imitation of foreign gardens and parks.

At the opening of the War of the Revolution this magnificent domain, with its almost royal privileges and income, belonged to the Philipse family. At the close of the Revolution the disloyal Philipse, so lately a Baron, was a fugitive, and this vast estate passed to the people. Never was there a greater shattering of a princely holding. Never a greater diffusion of vast wealth. From the pinnacle of power cast down in a day to the very depth, shorn both of power and land. What the last Philipse managed to carry to England with him has as yet not been disclosed to his people whom he left upon the Hudson, or to their descendants.

PART III

DISSOLUTION OF THE MANOR.

Frederick Philipse, Esquire, Lord of the Manor of Philipsburgh, late Speaker of the Colonial Assembly, the last of the American Philipses, (for the family has been continued to this time at Chester, England,) had to withdraw his family from Manor Hall at Yonkers, and was domiciled in a safer and more congenial spot than his late residence among the patriotic yeomen of Westchester County. John Williams, his steward, alone remained, calmly awaiting the summons which was to dispossess both his worshipful master and himself from Manor, mill and farm; hoping perhaps for a restoration, which was fated never to come to pass. An angry tenantary in actual possession of all but a few hundred acres immediately adjacent to the Manor House, clamored with communistic zeal for a division of the spoils. A patriotic but peripatetic State Legislature, fleeing from place to place, constantly in fear lest the British army should overtake and capture them at one of their proscribed sessions, listened with only too willing ears to the doubtful proposals of the patriots. But, alas! for patriotic hopes, the moving assembly scarcely found time to tarry long enough to attend to its most urgent business, to say nothing about confiscation acts, bills of attainder, and division of the spoils of war. So confiscation and distribution had to wait.

It was not until the third session of the Legislature of the State of New York, held at Kingston, Ulster County, that an act was passed relating to the "forfeiture and sale of the property of the enemies of the State." This remarkable act, which bears date October twenty-second, seventeen hundred and seventy-nine, recites in its preamble the war with Great Britain and the fact that divers persons holding property in the State have adhered to the King of Great Britain. It then proceeds to enact and declare that Frederick Philipse, now or late of the County of Westchester and many others, be and each of them are hereby severally declared to be *ipso facto* con-

victed and attainted of the offence," (of voluntary adhesion to the King of Great Britain,) and declares all the property of the aforesaid "to be forfeited to and vested in the People of the State of New York." A simple but potent process. Thus by a single section of an Act passed by a fugitive Assembly of rebels, the magnificent domain we have been considering fell into the hands of the people.

Of course the "People" in the shape of the State did not want the land, but the tenants of Frederick Philipse did. The State needed the prize money, which confiscation promised. So the State appointed Commissioners of Forfeitures, so-called, to dispose of the confiscated land, and probably at the same time appropriated any movable property the gentry had abandoned.

Lest the tenants of the Manor should lose their individual holdings, or disloyal parties buy when the sale should take place it was provided, that each tenant should have pre-emption of his farm at an appraised price upon furnishing satisfactory evidence of his loyalty to the "cause." On its part the State promised that every deed given by the Commissioners of Forfeiture should operate as a warranty from the People of the State of New York. Then as if fearing a restoration of baronial rule the Act provided that the quantity of land to be sold in one parcel should not exceed five hundred acres. It was then further provided that the dear tenants or any other patriotic purchaser might pay for their purchases in either of ten specified kinds of currency then in common use.

By way of an amendment a later Legislature declared the unfortunate Philipse and other attainted parties "to be forever banished from this State" and declared them if found thereafter within its borders "guilty of felony," for which crime, "they shall suffer death, as in the case of felony, without benefit of clergy." They were therefore traitors because they left the country, and would be felons should they return to it. How those innocent wolves of tenants all over the Manor must have chuckled when they read or heard about the ferocious warning to their loved Lord of the Manor of Philipsburgh.

Poor Philipse lost his lands by going away, but he saved his neck from the halter by remaining at Chester. Before the hungry tenants had all been supplied with farms the Lord of the Manor had been gathered to his fathers.

The owner ousted and a fugitive, the tenants found a new task-master in the State, which demanded not only the purchase price, but all arrears of rent which the wily tenants thought they had saved.

In spite of Acts and amendments to Acts the authorities delayed the sales, and the angry tenantry grew impatient.

William Paulding and many others, who described themselves as "Whig tenants of the Manor of Philipsburgh;" petitioned the legislature for "a speedy sale of forfeited lands in Philipsburgh Manor." This petition seems to have overtaken the State Government at Kingston, for, when the Legislature unceremoniously adjourned and moved on, Paulding's petition was left among bushels of waste paper, and was found in a garret in Kingston, and sold with other papers to the State by a thrifty burgher of that town. It was endorsed, "Referred to a Committee with orders to prepare a bill." This paper with others found at the same time may now be seen in the State Library at Albany.

After several years more of delay the Legislature, not quite so fugitive as formerly, found time to amend the Act of Forfeiture, and also to pass additional bills.

Some of the farms were sold by the Commissioners at public sale. Others they appraised and sold to the tenants. At the public sales it is recorded there were at times no bidders, again it often happened that the purchaser failed to pay for the farm he bought, and the parcel was sold anew.

A tenant having asked permission to purchase his farm, the Commissioners, after an appraisement, required the would-be purchaser to furnish them with what was called in those days a "Certificate of Attachment." This Certificate, verified by the oath of a dozen reputable inhabitants, read as follows:

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, and all of "us inhabitants of the County of Westchester, do certify "that ——— aforesaid, yeoman, hath constantly and uni- "formly since the said ninth day of July, one thousand "seven hundred and seventy-six, demined himself as a "Friend to the Freedom and Independence of the United "States, and hath, as far as his circumstances would "admit, taken an Active and Decisive part to maintain "and support the same."

Without this certificate the Commissioners would not act upon the tenant's petition. What a grand opportunity here to get permanently rid of an obnoxious neighbor, or what a chance for spiteful neighbors to get even with old scores.

What with such motives on the part of some, and the positive disloyalty to the patriot cause of others, one finds quite a number of the old tenants' names missing from the roll of purchasers.

But even when the patriot tenant received his long sought and precious deed he was not always secure in the possession, as witness the lamentable case of Arnold Hunt, who bought two hundred acres of Westchester County confiscated land. Among the Kingston rubbish is to be found his petition to the Legislature, wherein he makes this confession in asking for a new deed, namely, that he "went to New York City and had his pocket book taken "and his deed in it." From which little incident we are free to infer that New York City of a century ago was as dangerous and seductive to the simple minded, untutored Westchester County farmer of the day, as it sometimes is to his wiser successors at the present time.

The Old Manor House at Yonkers, with some three hundred acres around it, was sold to one Cornelius P. Low, a land speculator, whose name figures also in early records of the settlement of the Adirondack region.

And thus the vast estate of "Frederick Philipse of said County, Esquire," came into the possession of our forefathers, and the Manor of Philipsburgh passed into history.

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